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2 “Free Shops for Free Men”?

The Challenges of Strikebreaking and Union-Busting in the Progressive Era

CHAD PEARSON

Breaking strikes and busting unions has always been challenging, controversial, and messy work. At the beginning of the twentieth century, employers, the primary beneficiaries and frequent strategizers of union-fighting activities, usually found the tasks extraordinarily burdensome—and often hazardous. After all, they faced considerable obstacles from organized labor as well as from large sections of the general public, which often sided with struggling unionists in the context of labor disputes. Unionists and their leaders normally demanded the presence of closed shops—workplaces requiring that employees hold union membership as a condition for employment. They held that strikebreakers were responsible for driving down wages, undermining workplace standards, and threatening community harmony. Strikebreakers, union supporters routinely complained, placed their own short-term, narrow interests above the community’s concerns. As a Topeka, Kansas, newspaper reported in 1898, “renegades and scabs” selfishly earned paychecks while protestors and their “families are starving for bread.”¹

Union activists were seldom passive during industrial disputes. Many kept scrupulous lists of strikebreakers and frequently employed forms of coercion and intimidation against their working-class opponents. During an especially dramatic, thousand-person Albany, New York, transit strike in 1901, for example, irate protestors carried signs that read “Kill the Scabs!”² Writing about another group of strikebreakers in New Orleans during the following year, an Amalgamated Transit Union member scornfully called them “the scum of everything that is low, dirty, and contemptible.”³ In union circles and beyond, practically no one occupied a lower position in society than the hated scab.

In fact, union activists, believing that the presence of nonunionists eroded workplace conditions and morale, often proclaimed their unwillingness to work next to those without union cards. Speaking in 1903, John Mitchell, the relatively conservative leader of the United Mine Workers of America, explained the justification: “What the unionists in such cases do is merely to stipulate as a condition that they shall not be obliged to work with the men who, as non-unionists, are obnoxious, just as they shall not be obliged to work in a dangerous or unsanitary factory for unduly long hours or at insufficient wages.”⁴ Recognizing that the presence of antiunionists severely hampered their ability to negotiate collectively for workplace improvements, many acted on a “no card, no work” principle and periodically staged walkouts when employers refused to discharge the “obnoxious scabs.”⁵ Indeed, one does not need to consult only union sources to identify this general view. Popular novelist Jack London perhaps summed it up best when he wrote in 1905 that union supporters generally shared a “terrible hatred” for these individuals.⁶

It is not surprising that these criticisms contrasted sharply with the views held by employers and their allies. For self-interested reasons, business owners and their supporters actively sought to employ nonunionists and strikebreakers during industrial clashes and insisted that these vulnerable individuals must receive public respect, even praise, for engaging in courageous acts. A diversity of antiunionists—machinists, molders, railway workers, cutters in garment factories, carpenters, printers, and others—needed protection and moral sympathy for their gutsy efforts. Writing in the *Kansas City Independent* in 1900, George Creel—a soon-to-be leader of the open-shop movement and later the foremost prowar propagandist during President Woodrow Wilson’s administration—insisted that “non-union laborers” must enjoy “their right to work.”⁷ Creel was not alone, and others criticized unionists for taking their activism to extremes. Speaking about the overall plight of nonunionists and strikebreakers four years later, C. W. Post, the millionaire cereal manufacturer from Battle Creek, Michigan, explained, “he is ostracized, his little garden ruined, his well poisoned, his cow killed, his fences destroyed, his relatives bulldozed and injured if they associated with him, his children beaten at school, his family insulted and threatened and he personally attacked and beaten and made a social outcast.” The victimized nonunionist, Post complained, was trapped, unable to “obtain vehicles to transport his household belongings even at the dead of night.”⁸ In essence, Creel, Post, and their colleagues believed that these risk-takers were entitled to safety, steady paychecks, and most important, social acceptance. The strikebreaker, forced to continuously confront what employers and their

allies considered horrid abuses was, as Harvard University President Charles W. Eliot famously stated in 1896, "a hero."⁹

Turning scabs into heroes was one of the open-shop movement's central, long-term aims, propelling those in the forefront of strikebreaking campaigns to look inward and pose a series of questions: How could they effectively recruit strikebreakers and nonunionists? Could they, as employers, somehow remove the social stigmas carried by such workers? Was it possible to convince the U.S. public that strikebreakers and nonunionists were not responsible for lowering wages? Would it be conceivable to persuade the public that antiunionists were honorable, rather than contemptible, individuals? And most important, how could they, as employers, resume production and reestablish greater managerial control to prevent future outbreaks of labor unrest?

This chapter explores the organizational and rhetorical strategies that employers and their allies adopted as they attempted to transform scabs into heroes and thus minimize their most pressing labor problems.¹⁰ Above all, employers sought to deploy a contrary rhetoric and perspective to the general public in order to counter the belittled image of strikebreakers and nonunionists advanced by the labor movement and its supporters like Jack London. Labor-hungry managers collaborated with wide sections of society to recruit adequate pools of independent-minded, competent workers. In an effort to assist them and defend their own financial interests, employers—those most intimately affected by this problem—formed powerful organizations with one another and with broad sections of society. They developed both national and community-based strategies and were moderately successful. While employers and their allies succeeded in breaking hundreds of strikes and reducing the overall power of organized labor in many workplaces and communities, they were unable to eliminate the broader stigma attached to strikebreakers and nonunionists.

In making my case about the ways employers sought to recast the debate about the place of strikebreakers and union-busters in the early twentieth century, I outline the emergence and efforts of three types of private-sector organizations forming the core of the early open-shop movement: employers' associations, unions of antiunion workers—in essence, organizations of nonunionists—and more inclusive, multioccupational Citizens' Alliances. During this era, employers' groups like the National Founders' Association (NFA), the National Metal Trades Association (NMTA), the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the National Erectors' Association (NEA), and countless local organizations helped lead a series of aggressive campaigns against what its spokespersons often labeled "labor union monopolies." In

1906 Post maintained that labor union “monopolies” constituted “the greatest trust with which the people have had to contend.”¹¹

From coast to coast, “the people”—a nebulous, cross-class body of anti-unionists—united in an effort to reduce this threat. Writing about the development of campaigns to protect the interests of employers and nonunionists in 1904, journalist Ray Stannard Baker expressed admiration for its geographical broadness and inclusivity. “Nearly every city,” Baker wrote, “boasts its full-fledged Employers’ Association or Citizens’ Alliance, sometimes both.” A muckraker and vocal defender of antiunion workers, Baker reported that the membership in many of these monopoly-fighting, non-union-defending organizations was not led by wealthy industrialists. Some of these organizations allowed those without a direct stake in industrial conflicts—clergymen, lawyers, judges, journalists, college professors, and politicians—to join.¹² Some were even open to antiunion workers. These organizations—manufacturers’ associations, working-class groups of antiunionists, and multioccupational Citizens’ Associations—sought to demonstrate that they did not campaign for the privileged classes. Instead, they constituted a wide-ranging multioccupational crusade led by an honorable coalition of “the people.”¹³ Employers had essentially sparked, in other words, a collective, class-neutral project designed to recast the meaning of strikebreaking and union-busting activities by insisting that diverse coalitions supported the rights of nonunionists. From the perspective of open-shop movement partisans, these ill-defined categories, “citizens” and “the people,” promoted industrial freedom and community harmony for all. In reality, the campaigns to defend nonunionists and strikebreakers, both logistically and ideologically, were primarily led by, and principally benefited, employers.

Strikebreaking and Union-Busting from Above

The need to create a collective response designed to legitimize the strikebreaking process and to protect the rights of antiunion job seekers and employees became especially clear to employers just before the open-shop movement’s formal emergence in the late nineteenth century. The reason was simple enough: many managers realized that job hunters found the task of breaking strikes morally reprehensible, mentally stressful, and physically perilous. Indeed, numerous job seekers, aware of the stigma attached to the act of crossing picket lines, flatly refused to do the employer’s dirty work.

During strikes, some labor-hungry employers came to realize that concealing the existence of industrial disputes was not a particularly effective way of recruiting and sustaining a stable workforce. Consider the controversy

surrounding a strike at the Mosher Manufacturing Company, a midsize manufacturer of boilers, electrical appliances, engines, and machinery in Dallas. In June 1897, several men from Birmingham, Chattanooga, and St. Louis, lured by a labor recruiter, traveled hundreds of miles to the northern Texas city for the advertised jobs. Once in Dallas, the job seekers discovered to their surprise a rather tense and chaotic strike. A Houston paper sympathetic to the striking molders reported that "Mr. Mosher has induced men to come to Dallas upon the representation that the strike was off."¹⁴ The paper stated that one Birmingham worker, desperate for steady employment, had pawned his watch and sold his bicycle to pay for the transportation costs. Once in Dallas, he had "learned of the strike" and complained that "he isn't the kind of a man to come to Dallas to help the Mosher company beat down the wages of his fellow workmen." This unidentified individual was not the only person to withhold his labor power from what strikers and their supporters called "an unfair shop."¹⁵ Numerous others, initially enticed by the promise of paychecks, also refused to cross picket lines. Labor recruitment problems, needless to say, hurt W. S. Mosher's ability to run his business.¹⁶

Mosher's experience was one of thousands of such challenges faced by owners and managers throughout the nation. And these businessmen, recognizing the collective nature of their troubles, looked to one another for assistance, on both the local and the national levels. Mosher, Post, and numerous others, alarmed by repeated instances of labor unrest and workers' principled opposition to working in unfair shops, helped to launch and sustain the nation's first nationally coordinated open-shop movement, a movement that was formed partially to turn scabs into heroes.

Shortly after suffering through the 1897 strike, Mosher joined the newly formed National Founders' Association (NFA), which emerged in 1898 under the leadership of William H. Pfahler, a Philadelphia stove manufacturer.¹⁷ Under Pfahler's guidance, the NFA both negotiated with and fought the Iron Molders' Union (IMU), a politically moderate union of craft workers founded in 1859. Although Pfahler and his colleagues enjoyed mostly cordial relationships with IMU leaders from 1898 to 1904, the NFA regularly mobilized strikebreakers when union members disrupted production. As John A. Penton, the NFA's first salaried organizer and secretary, said to a membership meeting in early 1899, "When men are wanted to take the place of strikers, much assistance can be rendered if each member will take it upon himself to offer the secretary the services of any volunteers whom they may secure in their own establishments, or of those applying for work who are willing to go to such positions."¹⁸ Penton had requested, in essence, that conscientious members scrupulously evaluate the character, competency, and work histories

of their men. As committed members of the new “defense association,”¹⁹ the employers—representing industrial communities throughout the nation—needed to ask themselves a number of questions: Were their wage earners loyal to their workplaces or to the union? Could they count on their faithful men to break strikes and work in distant cities? Would they travel? In essence, could foundry operators make heroes out of their loyal workmen? In asking these questions, Penton played an important role in helping foundry owners see themselves as collective problem solvers, not as cutthroat competitors. NFA members—self-interested profit seekers profoundly annoyed by escalating workplace tensions sparked by labor union monopolies—ultimately benefited from this labor-sharing plan. The plan was meant to give employers like Mosher the necessary resources—competent workers uncorrupted by the values of labor unionism and unwilling to submit to organized labor’s pressure—that were unavailable to him two years earlier.

Penton proved to be reliable, repeatedly assisting NFA members forced to confront labor troubles. This was especially true in Cleveland in 1900, when he began issuing special employment cards to nonunion molders willing to cross picket lines during what became a particularly intense, multiworkplace IMU-initiated job action—dubbed “one of the greatest industrial wars in the foundry trade” by one NFA member.²⁰ After advertising for hundreds of molder positions in newspapers and collaborating with NFA members—the individuals best equipped to judge the levels of proficiency and loyalty of their workmen—Penton eventually secured more than six hundred card-carrying nonunionists. Apparently, this was a win-win solution. According to Penton, the card “will always guarantee them permanent employment under the rules of the Association.” He continued: “The holder of these cards will possess a very valuable document, one that will place him in a very unique position.”²¹

We do not know how the strikebreakers viewed these cards, but we can confidently surmise that the picketers hardly regarded them as any sort of honorable or “valuable document.” In fact, hundreds of cardholders confronted considerable hostility on the picket lines surrounding the struck foundries almost immediately after arriving in Cleveland. Scuffles broke out between the strikebreakers and protestors, and union publications tarred the scabs with insults, calling them “prostitutes” and “scum.” According to the *Iron Molders’ Journal*, they were “the very lowest and most degraded of scabs.”²² While the cards must have given nonunionists at least some comfort in knowing that they enjoyed protections from the vicissitudes of a boom and bust economy, they were nevertheless unable to escape aggression or overcome the shame attached to their role. Penton, the employers, and their

allies behind the nascent open-shop movement clearly had more work to do as they sought greater control over the labor market and better public relations.²³

The NFA continued to help foundry operators embroiled in labor battles after the Cleveland conflict, promising to pay generous wages to antiunion molders willing to travel distances and work during strikes. The IMU continued to organize strikes in many cities, including in union strongholds like Chicago. While most early-twentieth-century northeastern and Midwestern foundry operators paid their molders between \$2 and \$3 per day, the NFA offered, according to an advertisement in a Minneapolis newspaper in early 1902, \$3.75 and "permanent employment and no trouble" to those willing to help Chicago foundry operators resume production during the strike.²⁴ NFA leaders hoped that decent pay and stable employment provided enough incentive to secure the loyalty of molders and therefore dissuade them from participating in union activities. It is difficult to measure the success of this strikebreaking campaign, but we do know that Chicago remained a relatively strong union town in this period. Scholars have told us that, in the face of pressure, many employers, including those who identified themselves as open-shop proponents, reluctantly negotiated with unions in closed shops.²⁵

The era's most aggressive and effective opponent of closed shops was the NFA's sister organization, the National Metal Trades Association (NMTA). Founded in 1899, The NMTA pioneered the use of union-breaking labor bureaus—centralized hiring centers where the association's salaried secretaries kept files on job applicants. The purpose was to reward nonunionists with employment opportunities and punish labor activists through a blacklisting system. NMTA members, with help from the labor bureaus that were beginning to form, sought to employ the most efficient and loyal workers—and to ensure that the troublemakers were effectively barred from entering member workplaces. Branches in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Worcester, Massachusetts, helped launch this system of centralized hiring shortly after International Association of Machinists (IAM)–sponsored strikes in 1901 and 1902 respectively. The primary targets of these job actions, employers who oversaw mostly modest-sized shops, had become convinced of the need for such a scheme.²⁶ By mid-decade, organized employers in most medium- and large-sized industrialized communities had adopted labor bureaus, and cries of unfair blacklists could be heard from union halls and picket lines throughout much of the nation. Speaking to strikers in Worcester about the employers' blacklisting activities during a 1902 strike, IAM organizer Maurice W. Landers complained that "Your board of trade here in Worcester is the first body of that kind I ever heard of in the United States which constituted itself into

an employment bureau and sought to engage non-union workmen to take away the living from its own citizens.”²⁷ Worcester had one of the first, but it was not the last.²⁸

Employers’ association leaders, fully aware of the public relations backlash triggered by decades of strikebreaking activities, sought to frame their hiring and firing policies in ways that appeared progressive and respectable. It is not surprising that employers and their spokespersons did not publicly refer to strikebreakers as scabs or even as the less provocative phrase nonunionists. In spring 1901, the NMTA, shortly after defeating a multicity machinists’ strike, passed a resolution prohibiting “the word ‘non-union’ in all official documents.” Instead, the leadership required that members use the words “free men” and “free shops” when describing nonunionists and open-shop workplaces.²⁹ “Free men” were not, they implied, permanent proletariats with interests separate from their employers; rather, they were ambitious, upwardly mobile, monopoly-opposing, and law-abiding backers of the individual rights of employers and employees. In essence, these men embraced values entirely different from those adopted by union leaders or by rank-and-file militants. The chief divisions in industrial society, open-shop employers and “free workers” sought to show, were not between labor and capital, but rather, between hardworking, patriotic, independent-minded and law-abiding workers on the one hand and lawless, monopoly-imposing unionists, on the other.

Open-shop movement spokespersons emphasized that these “free” workers were highly competent, loyal, and first-class, certainly not scum, as union activists often called them. As a contributor to the *Bulletin of the National Metal Trades Association* explained in 1904, such “men are used as leading workmen in struck shops, as employment agents, and in many other ways for the benefit of the members of the association.”³⁰ From the perspective of employers, the “first-class” men were upstanding role models, individuals who did much more than simply fill employment vacancies. They were, in essence, stewards of good U.S. citizenship, willing to collaborate closely with employers and thus demonstrate that they shared their core values. They wanted others to follow their example. They were, in a word, heroic.

Yet it is highly unlikely that most machinists opted to break strikes because they wanted to demonstrate their heroism. Employers’ association members understood that self-interest almost always trumped idealism. Like the NFA, the NMTA’s strikebreaking planners and practitioners recognized the necessity of offering economic incentives and making the often punishing process of picket-line crossing as financially rewarding and problem-free as possible. Its members, in short, showed a willingness to pay a premium for hundreds of courageous “first-class men.” An NMTA-sponsored job advertisement in

a Paducah, Kentucky, newspaper in 1907 even used fear tactics during a year marked by an acute economic crisis: "Jobs won't be so easy to get next year. We can use 500 machinists. Highest wages, steady employment guaranteed. Transportation advanced to machinists having first-class references."³¹ It is noteworthy that in 1907, the NMTA—which by this time had established itself as a leader in the increasingly successful open-shop movement—promised more than merely stable employment to those with "first-class references." The well-funded NMTA was also willing to invest in long-distance transportation costs to ensure that the most efficient and loyal men arrived at their employment destinations without confronting labor-related troubles. Those with "first-class references" had no need to, say, sell their bicycles, watches, or any other personal items to pay for any travel-related costs.

By at least one important measure, the NMTA's labor-replacement strategy succeeded admirably. The association's commissioner in Cincinnati, Robert Wuest, boasted that the organization faced off against strikers on 126 occasions in 1907 and succeeded in all but four.³² This required a considerable amount of financial investment as well as trust and unity of action, just as NFA members demonstrated a collaborative spirit during its conflicts. In early 1907, Wuest bragged about the organization's accomplishments: "The experience," he reported, "has demonstrated to [the NMTA membership]—as it should to other manufacturers eligible to membership but not affiliated with us—that as an association we stand for all that is best for both employer and employee by creating the Open Shop."³³

Strikebreaking and Union-Busting from Below?

The establishment of unions of antiunion workers, paradoxically, signaled a second, equally important, development in the history of strikebreaking and union-busting. These organizations emerged at roughly the same time that employers' associations like the NFA and the NMTA had fought, and mostly defeated, sectors of the labor movement by replacing strikers and union activists with "first-class free men." In many cases, organizations of antiunion workers assisted national employers' associations by serving as capable—and sometimes even eager—reserve forces of labor. These bodies of workers wanted to labor without observing union rules and restrictions. Their representatives echoed the language of employers' association spokespersons by claiming that their members were competent, loyal, and law-abiding men, not pariahs or scabs. Yet it is noteworthy that those who spoke on behalf of this supposedly bottom-up movement tended to be employers and their middle-class allies, not working-class antiunionists. How much power ordinary people had over

these organizations remains unclear, but we do know that numerous cities—including Elmira, New York; Detroit; and Muncie, Indiana—became home to chapters of “independent” labor leagues in 1903.

The first union of nonunion workers to emerge in the English-speaking world was Britain’s National Free Labour Association (NFLA). Established in 1893 by former trade unionist William Collison, the organization formed because its members supposedly believed that trade unionism had become irredeemably disruptive and radical. In his 1913 autobiography, a patriotic Collison explained the reason: “Modern Trade Unionism is an accursed thing, a greater enemy to this country than any foreign power, a greater enemy to you and me than the bitterest individual enemy of ours that exists; I was not only speaking and thinking against it, but was actively fighting it. I was breaking strikes.”³⁴ Strikebreaking was nothing short of a moral duty, Collison recounted, because modern trade unionism had dramatically sought to inaugurate “a permanent reign of terrorism.”³⁵ Confronting unions was a demanding process, he reported, noting that labor organizers had venomously lashed out at association members, disdainfully calling them “thieves” and insisting that they were “doing the dirty work of the Employers.”³⁶ Collison categorically rejected these statements, declaring that his organization’s hardworking and lawful laborers played a truly vital role, one that promoted industrial efficiency and benefited employers, workers, and society generally. Writing about a group of independent dockworkers, he explained that they “proved trustworthy and competent, and obtained the largest share in the vast amount of work executed in the docks, wharves, and riverside industries of the Port of London.”³⁷ For two decades, Collison’s organization enjoyed enormous successes: “In twenty years eight hundred and fifty thousand workmen belonging to one hundred and fifty different trades have been registered, and the Association has fought and been successful in no less than six hundred and eighty-two pitched battles with aggressive Trade Unions in different parts of the United Kingdom.”³⁸ Collison, proud of these dramatic accomplishments in the face of belligerent opponents, had become financially successful himself, offering British employers a useful service during times of need while offering managers internationally an effective strikebreaking model.

Numerous union critics in the United States followed Collison’s lead. The most ambitious figure was Reverend Edwin Milton Fairchild of Albany, New York. In early 1903, Fairchild helped embittered wage earners from the International Association of Machinists in Elmira, New York, launch the Independent Labor League of America. Shortly after its formation in Elmira, the league established branches in a half-dozen additional cities, places where it

collaborated closely with employers' associations like the NMTA. Above all, it provided struck employers with critical labor needs.³⁹

Fairchild's initial encounters with organized labor help to explain why he championed the league's establishment. In May 1901, the Oberlin College-educated clergyman witnessed Albany's massive streetcar strike, an intense, eleven-day confrontation staged by one thousand unionists against the United Traction Company. Enjoying much public support, the strikers demanded wage increases, job stability, and a closed shop. Far from peaceful, some, according to newspaper accounts, carried "kill the scabs" signs and fought against numerous belligerent forces—Pinkertons, Thiel Detective service men, local police, National Guardsmen, and strikebreakers. Participants from both sides were guilty of violent acts, though it is very possible, even likely, that employer-backed agents provocateurs were responsible for carrying the threatening signs.⁴⁰

Intellectually inquisitive, adventurous, and morally driven, Fairchild explained that he "was out in it all." He carefully observed the mobilization of protestors, the presence of baton-wielding policemen, and the curious, and periodically riotous, crowds of onlookers. He was particularly disturbed by the ways union members harassed and attacked the strikebreakers, though he was silent about the much more effective violence that National Guardsmen inflicted on the protestors. Yet in a 1903 article published in an employers' association magazine, Fairchild wrote that he wanted to understand the conflict as thoroughly as possible; he interviewed participants and took pictures of strike scenes. The result of his endeavors was a lengthy study: "I have here on my desk a MS. of 150 pages, illustrated with 120 photographs, containing the details of this strike. No such study has ever before been prepared."⁴¹

Fairchild continued to investigate the causes, characteristics, and consequences of labor conflicts after Albany's streetcar strike, which resulted in wage increases but no closed shop. A year later, he visited the scenes of the 1902 Hudson Valley Railway strike in nearby Glens Falls and then traveled to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, an area affected by an extraordinary anthracite coalmine strike involving thousands. Demonstrators in both these protests demanded that their employers offer wage increases and recognize their unions.⁴² Fairchild took his investigations seriously and conducted, by his own admission, "hundreds of interviews" of strikers and strikebreakers. He saw himself as a disinterested figure. "The very fact that I am a clergyman, and not an employer, has made it possible for me to get an understanding of this labor problem from the workman's point of view," he wrote in 1903. Fairchild essentially explained that he had approached the labor question as both a social reformer and as curious, open-minded researcher. But he

was hardly nonpartisan. During the course of his study, he had developed sympathies with strikebreakers, the primary victims of picket-line scuffles. A proponent of the open-shop principle, Fairchild felt a sense of urgency to do something “before the radicals have a chance to revolutionize.”⁴³ After conducting his field research in late 1902, Fairchild proclaimed his commitment to helping victims of closed-shop unionism establish the National League of Independent Workmen of America. Those involved in the league would, as Fairchild explained, “demand that employers run their shops as ‘open shops.’”⁴⁴

Almost two hundred miles from his Albany home, Fairchild found employees willing to establish an organization like the one Collison had launched a decade earlier. The members constituted a sizable minority of workers at the Payne Company, a modest-sized engine manufacturing establishment in Elmira, a heavily industrialized riverfront city in New York State’s southern tier. Elmira was the scene of numerous labor conflicts after the Payne Company’s arrival. The owner, N. B. Payne, who employed about fifty workers, became a leading member of the NMTA after confronting numerous challenges from the International Association of Machinists.⁴⁵ Payne’s union-supporting workers had long harbored grievances, including frustration over low pay, increases in workloads, and company-imposed “yellow dog” contracts—guaranteeing that workers would refrain from joining unions. As a result, union activists staged several protests, including strikes in September 1899, May 1901, and January 1903. Payne stubbornly resisted their demands, and a handful of his workers—whom the NMTA called “free men”—had sided with him during these disputes.⁴⁶ From the union’s perspective, the company had long provoked conflict. Writing about it in 1903, the IAM publication, the *Machinists’ Monthly Journal*, reported that “ever since this company came to Elmira, some eighteen or twenty years ago, they have had trouble with their men with marked regularity.”⁴⁷

Traditionally, Payne had received at least some community support during disputes. Local clergymen had preached the need for protestors to respect management rights, and judges issued injunctions to protect Payne and strikebreakers. During the 1899 strike, for example, Reverend James A. Miller told a meeting of Payne strikers to “concede to capitalists their rights in carrying on their business.”⁴⁸ Miller’s message was clear enough, essentially explaining to unionists that they must refrain from harassing managers and antiunion workers, the labor force essential to the resumption of production.

Reverend Miller was unable to convince all, or even most, labor activists to allow antiunion employees to work during industrial conflicts. This was especially clear during an intense strike in 1903 against Payne’s “premium

system"—an incentive system that tied individual pay rates to one's level of productivity. In essence, Payne provided bonuses to his most productive men, a practice that encouraged individual hard work and thus created a competitive shop-floor atmosphere—one fundamentally irreconcilable with the long-honored principle of labor solidarity. At this time, twenty premium system supporters refused to join picket lines, thus abandoning their union commitments. They were joined by three NMTA-mobilized strikebreakers from Midwestern cities. Predictably, union machinists called the defectors and imported strikebreakers scabs and attempted to curtail their movements, hoping to prevent them from entering the workplace. Payne, in turn, secured an injunction from Judge Walter Lloyd Smith of the Chemung County Supreme Court. On 14 February 1903, Smith declared that IAM members and their supporters must "desist and refrain from" harassing

the employees of the plaintiff now in its employ, and from in any manner interfering with any person who may desire to enter the employ of the plaintiff by means of threats, intimidation, espionage, picketing, personal violence, the calling or applying of the names 'scab,' 'pimp,' 'pup,' or any other indecent, insulting, or opprobrious name or epithet, or by any other means whatsoever calculated or intended to compel, prevent, or force any person from entering or continuing in the employment of the plaintiff, or calculated or intended to induce through fear, apprehension, or loss of social standing or injury to property or peace, any person from entering or continuing in the employment of the plaintiff, or calculated or intended to induce any such person to leave the employment of the plaintiff.⁴⁹

Elmira's IAM local faced considerable obstacles: an obstinate employer, an injunction-issuing judge, and a lack of working-class solidarity.

Shortly after Judge Smith issued his intractable ruling, the union confronted an additional, equally alarming, challenge: the establishment of the Independent Labor League of America's first local chapter, which consisted largely of the nonstriking machinists. Encouraged by Fairchild, the league labeled itself an "American spirited" organization, one that pledged to reject socialism and anarchism, promote workplace harmony from below, and encourage respect for the open-shop principle. Fairchild predicted that politically moderate, hardworking, antimonopolistic, and upwardly mobile wage earners in other communities would follow the lead of Elmira's independent-minded machinists and join this movement, which he believed needed the support of both workers and employers: "If employers give a fair chance for the growth of an American-spirited, independent labor organization it will sweep the country in five years."⁵⁰

The Albany clergyman had, in his mind, helped establish a genuine organization of heroes, and he was eager to share this development with one of the nation's most illustrious defenders of strikebreakers, Charles W. Eliot. Fairchild appreciated that the Harvard University president continued to use the word "heroes" when describing strikebreakers. "There is," Fairchild wrote in 1903, "no other public man in this country who knows as you do how to say the right word at the effective time in just the right way."⁵¹ Fairchild had learned that Eliot had recently employed the term during a speech in Buffalo and wanted to tell the Harvard leader about the "great body of [nonunion] workmen" he had helped organize during the past couple of years. Rather than take credit for the organization's emergence, Fairchild assured Eliot that he had played only a modest role: "I am only an outsider myself, whom some of the workmen are consulting a little."⁵²

The extent of Fairchild's role remains unclear, but we do know that the Elmira league established ten goals in February 1903, almost immediately after helping Payne resume production. Most of its objectives were consistent with the core aims of the growing, employer-led open-shop movement. First, it called for protection "of independent workmen in their independence." Second, it stated its opposition to "strikes and lock-outs, boycotts and black-lists." The organization was not merely interested in protecting employers. Third: "to obtain higher wages, shorter hours and better conditions, by—a. More intelligent application of our energies. b. Harmonious co-operation with our employers. And c. Legitimate business methods." Fourth: "to furnish favorable conditions for training apprentices, in order that our boys may become successful workmen." Fifth: "To compel officers of the local, state, and national government to enforce the laws and to compel Labor Unions and others to observe the laws." Sixth: "To protect members against unjust treatment from employers by due process of law." Seventh: "To provide an employer bureau for members." Eighth: "To provide means for members to guard against sickness and accident." Ninth: "To provide educational opportunities for its members." And finally: "To provide in all lawful ways for the welfare of the members and the maintenance of their rights under the laws and constitution of the United States."⁵³

The league's stated objectives are noteworthy for several reasons. Spokespersons did not see it as paradoxical to use collective means to promote individualism. Nor did they have a problem with embracing the politics of law and order while supporting nonunion apprentice training programs. These agenda items amplified the calls made by thousands of union-fighting employers. Yet a few of its other objectives, including numbers three, six, eight, and nine, resembled the primary aims of confrontational trade unions,

organizations that sought to extract pay raises and benefits from their employers. It would seem that, in order to appeal to workers, the league had to acknowledge unjust treatment by certain employers. Employers, the organization implied, shared at least some blame for shop-floor tensions and outbreaks of labor conflicts. In addition, the league called for higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions, education, and health care—goals consistent with the aims of traditional, combative unions.

But there were obvious differences between the Independent Labor League and traditional trade unions. League members believed that they could secure their aims—better wages, shorter hours, safe workplaces, health insurance, and improved educational opportunities—by serving as bottom-up partners in the broad fight for open-shop workplaces. Embracing the open-shop philosophy and advocating better conditions, league members maintained, were perfectly compatible. But they promised to conduct their advocacy peacefully and lawfully, refusing to ever withhold their labor power, threaten fellow workers, or harm the long-term financial interests of their employers. The simple justness of their objectives, league members held, was enough to convince fair-minded employers to make workplace improvements and reward efficient and loyal employees.⁵⁴ In essence, they believed that labor reforms were winnable only by working proficiently, showing sufficient deference to their bosses, honoring the nation's laws, and opposing labor union monopolies.

The Independent Labor League had moved beyond Elmira's borders in the following months. Soon, antiunionists in Albany, New York City, Detroit, and Sherman, Texas, among others, joined lodges, and its members began collaborating with many employers active in the growing open-shop movement. During a Brooklyn shipyard strike in June 1903, for instance, the secretary of New York City's Metal Trades Association, Henry C. Hunter, was thankful and relieved that league members agreed to cross the picket line and that it "has a branch in New York and undertakes to supply competent men."⁵⁵ Some contacted the league before establishing businesses. For instance, one unnamed Ohio employer contacted the league in 1904 seeking "members of the Independent Labor League of America in a large new foundry which we are ready to start."⁵⁶

An assortment of employers, middle-class reformers, and antiunion workers helped establish similar unions of antiunionists elsewhere. The development of such organizations was uneven, and it is perhaps unsurprising that most emerged in communities with strong traditions of employer-led antiunion activities. Altogether, Indiana, home state of National Association of Manufacturers president David M. Parry, contained more than 3,000

members of antiunion unions in 1903, and some presumably received higher pay than those holding union membership cards. According to a March 1903 report in *The Iron Trade Review*—a trade publication later owned and edited by Penton that covered the dynamics of the open-shop movement—antiunion organizations of workers declared a willingness “to assist its members in obtaining the highest wages consistent with the general good of all concerned.”⁵⁷ Writing about an antiunion union of building trade workers in this state, Kansas City’s George Creel reported in June that “the average wages are higher than those paid under the union scale in the same cities.” The Indiana groups, like Elmira’s organization, presented themselves as hardworking laborers committed to workplace improvements and labor–management harmony. “Both the employers and the employes,” Creel announced, “say that the new system is working without friction.”⁵⁸ Because of the high wages and frictionless shop floors, workers, we are led to believe, had no need for confrontational unions that promoted their class interests. Tellingly, none of these open-shop publications included any direct statements from the “free workers” themselves.

Strikebreaking and Union-Busting from Somewhere in Between

During the especially disruptive, nationwide strike wave of 1903, employers, their middle-class allies outside industrial relations settings, and a modest number of workers articulated their demands that antiunionists receive additional protection from “union tyranny.” In the fall, close to three hundred self-identified reformers, members of urban-based commercial clubs, and activists in existing employers’ associations—including Creel, Parry, Penton, and Post—gathered in Chicago, where they formed the Citizens’ Industrial Association of America (CIAA). The CIAA, a national federation of local citizens’ alliances and employers’ associations, touted itself as an inclusive organization committed to helping business owners and antiunion workers conduct their businesses without facing harassment from unionists. The organization included the phrase “for the protection of the common people” on its letterhead.⁵⁹

The CIAA’s emergence and the outspoken support for the rights of “free” workers articulated by middle-class reformers helped to demonstrate the many-sided character of antiunionism. Indeed, the widespread mobilization of antiunionists during strikes combined with the moral and logistical backing they received from individuals like Eliot and Fairchild shows that support for the plight of nonunionists was not merely championed by

employers, the open-shop movement’s principal financial and managerial beneficiaries. Middle-class reformers—both as individuals and as members of citizens’ associations—and antiunion workers reinforced the argument that the movement was concerned with preserving law and order, promoting industrial progress, protecting “first-class free” workers, and eliminating “union monopolies.”

These antiunion movements were not, its spokespersons contended, designed to establish and maintain ruling-class hegemony. As Creel explained in 1903, the multilocal campaigns were meant to protect the rights of citizens generally and to fight all policies that promoted “the interests of any class against the other.”⁶⁰ Open-shop proponents, Creel continued, favored using language that deemphasized class divisions, including phrases like “labor and capital.” “That phrase,” he protested, “has done more to foment industrial discord and discontent than anything else in the world.” Moreover, Creel argued, “labor and capital” is misleading because the phrase establishes classes along false lines.” According to Creel, such words sparked unnecessary “bitterness and resentment” in a society that promoted upward mobility by rewarding those who displayed hard work, loyalty, and good character.⁶¹ Creel was joined by other spokespersons who insisted that class was an unsuitable category around which to organize. “Any class movement in this country, be it a workingman’s movement or an employers’ movement, is sure to fail,” wrote Reverend Charles Stelzle, a former International Association of Machinist member, in 1905, in the journal *The Open Shop*.⁶² In addition, so-called “class movements” and phrases like “labor and capital,” these spokespersons implied, failed to address the concerns of workers who remained wholly uninterested in joining unions or participating in strikes.

In an effort to establish an effective, ostensibly classless movement, CIAA leaders embraced many of the rhetorical techniques employed by the NFA, the NMTA, and the Independent Labor League. Like these organizations, CIAA members wanted to ensure that strikebreakers and nonunionists received a proper amount of financial, physical, and moral support. In the words of Percival D. Oviatt of Rochester, New York, their lives were extraordinarily grim, consisting of “alternating periods of labor and torment.” Speaking at a CIAA-sponsored meeting in 1904, Oviatt, a lawyer and future Rochester mayor, echoed Eliot in underlining the intrepidity with which strikebreakers confronted their overwhelming hazards: “His physical bravery is to be extolled, but his moral courage is heroic; and he needs it sorely when you see him not at all.” Reminding audiences of the continuous suffering antiunionists confronted both on and off picket lines, Oviatt called on his fellow employers to do more: “Toward such a man you ought to feel

the deepest respect and a duty broad enough to cover the sacrifices which he made in your behalf, and for the principles in which you and he believe.”⁶³ In essence, Oviatt urged his fellow activists to warmly embrace antiunionists by treating them as close partners engaged in an honorable, class-neutral fight, one that—in the collective views of the movement leadership—pitted the forces of decency against closed-shop unionism’s malicious wrongs.

Numerous employers and their allies had demonstrated a willingness to uphold this sense of duty during periods of workplace conflict by defending the rights of besieged antiunionists. Some CIAA members took exceptionally aggressive action against labor activists—and in the process presumably helped to cement greater ties with independent workers. For instance, Hugo Donzelmann of Cheyenne, Wyoming, speaking at another CIAA meeting in 1904, reported that Cheyenne’s Citizens’ Alliance refused to comply with union members when they “began to dictate to us.” The union had organized a strike at the railroad yard. “What did we do?” Donzelmann asked his colleagues. “Did we wait? Did we wait for the injunction law? Not us. We went to our homes and we got our guns, and, 463 strong, marched down to those yards and told these strikers that they would have to step aside and let any man work who pleased, and they stepped aside.” The triumphant, non-nonsense Donzelmann had bragged about the usefulness of applying Old West-style vigilante tactics to help solve the modern labor problem. “We broke the backbone of the strike,” he reported, “and since then have had no trouble with other strikes.”⁶⁴ Through their actions, Donzelmann and his colleagues revealed their duty, illustrating to fellow activists that his part of the West was no longer wild.

The participants and beneficiaries of this union-breaking campaign were not, Donzelmann insisted, merely concerned with protecting the interests of Cheyenne’s elite. Instead, Donzelmann, like Collison and Fairchild, claimed that he and his colleagues acted out of a genuine desire to help the community’s antiunionist laborers—“the common people”—free themselves from the misery of “union dictation.” And like the Independent Labor League, which emerged in the context of a strike, ordinary workers in Cheyenne apparently were active in the region’s newly formed Independent Order of Labor. Donzelmann told his fellow delegates in Indianapolis that he had chosen to travel to the conference in the interests of this new union of antiunionists, which was hatched, he pointed out, “as a result of their labor troubles.”⁶⁵ In Donzelmann’s interpretation, the local citizens’ association functioned selflessly, providing a layer of protection over loyal and law-abiding workers. In this account, it is unclear if the antiunion workers called for the citizens’ alliance’s assistance or whether the elites mobilized independently. We do

not know the answer because none of the actual worker-members of the Independent Order of Labor attended the event. Nevertheless, Donzelmann was confident enough to speak on their behalf.

Manufacturers and merchants active in open-shop associations responded favorably to the development of "independent" labor organizations, and they did not seem to care that their spokespersons were typically middle-class reformers and employers like Fairchild, Creel, and Donzelmann, rather than the actual workers themselves. Leading employer-activists like Post expressed appreciation for the presence of Independent Labor Leagues in New York and Indiana shortly after such organizations emerged. But Post, who had become a member of the fourteen-person leadership committee of the CIAA at its first meeting, worried that too few were able to free themselves from the bane of labor-union constraints. He nevertheless applauded what he believed were the progressive efforts of those resisting "the tyranny of the old unions." Post's National Association of Manufacturers endorsed these efforts, yet the cereal manufacturer bemoaned what he called "the hundreds of thousands of willing, intelligent workmen" compelled "to submit to the most insufferable conditions."⁶⁶

The CIAA remained, however, open to "free" workers who had committed themselves to fighting labor "tyranny" from below. Employers like Post helped lead the multioccupational group, but he eagerly collaborated with those who had encountered the labor problem from below. In 1906, another CIAA leader, James Emery, invited Britain's Collison to address the organization's annual conference. The former unionist-turned-strikebreaking-king spoke at the organization's convention in Chicago before touring the nation, where he delivered presentations and met seasoned union fighters, "some of the keenest intellects amongst the business men of America."⁶⁷ Many shared their frustration with Collison about the activities of demanding unionists, especially their refusal to labor next to nonunionists. Collison explained in his autobiography that he identified with their grievances, and found "the Trade Union bosses in America venal and corrupt to a degree, criminals resorting to every species of blackmail, unscrupulous and aggressive, and not hesitating to the use of dynamite and wholesale murder to enforce the 'closed shop.'"⁶⁸ Sharing the view of U.S. open-shop activists, Collison drew stark lines between the supposed criminality and corruption of trade union activists and the common people, the well-intentioned antiunionists who simply desired employment opportunities, steady pay, and peace.

How effective were the era's multiple campaigns? Employers—enjoying state support, networks of like-minded men in local and national associations, and access to growing numbers of antiunion workers—succeeded in

breaking many strikes in the twentieth century's early years. Groups like the NFA and the NMTA coordinated strikebreaking and union-busting services themselves by offering strikebreakers incentives and by running labor bureaus, whose secretaries closely scrutinized the background of job seekers, blacklisted union activists, and placed "free" workers in members' shops. And after industrial scuffles, these organizations typically, though certainly not always, received the results they desired. Citizens' associations also enjoyed victories. Speaking at the CIAA's second annual meeting in 1904, leader David M. Parry reported, "I believe that fully one thousand manufacturing establishments have, in the last year, abandoned the closed shop and thrown their doors open to workmen without regard to their membership or non-membership in a union."⁶⁹

As we have seen, employers like Parry and his fellow employers relied on allies outside industrial relations settings, including clergymen, individuals with considerable amounts of moral power. The open-shop advocacy articulated by Stelzle, Elmira's Miller, and above all, Fairchild—all of whom saw themselves as forward-thinking reformers—demonstrates that, in practice, some faith-based leaders were critical in justifying strikebreaking.⁷⁰ These figures, especially Fairchild, provided the movement with a degree of moral respectability, which was intended to illustrate the reformist, rather than the repressive, character of antiunion movements.⁷¹

Employer-activists like Wyoming's Hugo Donzelmann found that guns, like bibles, were also useful tools. Donzelmann and his colleagues were not alone, but instead were celebrated by like-minded employers for their efforts. This draws our attention to the undeniable repressive character of a movement meant to elevate the status of antiunion workers. Precisely how many employers resorted to violence in the face of labor strife is difficult to know for sure. Whatever the case, we can see that they justified brutality by deploying a full-throttled campaign of words that rooted itself in the Progressive Era world of reformism. They defended their vigilante operations not as coldhearted business decisions designed to maximize profits for themselves but instead as a morally necessary strategy meant to protect the common people.

Indeed, Parry's statement tells us nothing about the conditions under which workplaces became open shops, and it fails to explain how workers viewed this form of industrial relations. In any event, wage earners in many locations continued to perceive antiunionists and strikebreakers unfavorably, continuing to call them scabs. Organized labor's spokespersons and rank-and-file unionists throughout the nation saw right through the rhetorical and organizational techniques employed by the broad range of union-busting and strikebreaking activists, including both repressive employers and social

reformers. They also remained frustrated that some wage earners uncritically accepted the open-shop movement’s language. An unnamed writer for a union publication expressed irritation in 1905 that numerous ordinary people had failed to acknowledge “that behind all the palaver about the heroism of the scab, the boosting of the so-called ‘independent’ workmen, and the opposition to the ‘closed shop’ is the desire to coin more money out of wage earners.”⁷² But plenty of others rejected the movement’s propaganda. According to a 1920 labor publication, the scab was “a renegade to his class—an ingrate who will take the better hours and higher wages though he would not move a step to assist his fellow worker in his struggle to make the common lot of all workers better—the man who does not care who sinks so long as he swims. That is why the world hates a strikebreaker and a scab.”⁷³

Notes

1. “Strikes and Injunctions,” *Topeka Advocate and News*, 5 October 1898, 8.
2. For more on the Albany strike, see “Stones Thrown at Employees,” *New York Tribune*, 14 May 1901, 2; and Victor John Di Santo, “The Streetcar Workers of Albany, 1900–1921: The Union Era” (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1994), 157–97.
3. “New Orleans, La.,” *The Motorman and Conductor* 10 (1902), 8.
4. Quoted in “Two of a Kind,” *Official Journal of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America*, 2 (November 1903), 38.
5. See “From District, State and Local Organizers,” *American Federationist* 9 (August 1902), 456.
6. On workers who have abandoned their class interests, see Jack London, *War of the Classes* (London: Macmillan, 1905), 19–20. Historian John H. M. Laslett offers an example of this in *Colliers across the Sea: A Comparative Study of Class Formation in Scotland and the American Midwest, 1830–1924* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 120. See also Andrew W. Cohen, *The Racketeer’s Progress: Chicago and the Struggle for the Modern American Economy, 1900–1940* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 51–52. Scholars of union-busting and strikebreaking have supported the opinions of labor activists and Jack London. Stephen Norwood has repeated Mitchell’s point, noting that turn-of-the-century strikebreakers constituted “a labor force of very low social status, composed largely of the unemployed and containing criminal elements, whose conduct was violent and boisterous.” See Stephen H. Norwood, *Strikebreaking and Intimidation: Mercenaries and Masculinity in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 53. According to Robert Michael Smith, strikebreakers employed by the Pinkerton Detective Agency usually behaved like a “marauding army” and were “often drunk.” See Robert Michael Smith, *From Blackjacks to Briefcases: A History of Commercialized Strikebreaking and Unionbusting in the United States* (Athens: Ohio University Press), 11.

7. "Street Car Strikes," *Kansas City Independent*, 19 May 1900, 1.
8. C. W. Post, "The Employers' and Employes' Union," *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention of the National Association of Manufacturers* (1903), 124.
9. On the times Eliot called strikebreakers "heroes," see Charles J. Bonaparte, "President Eliot and the American University," *Boston Evening Transcript*, 19 March 1904, 2. Eliot was not the first to use this word. According to a trade union source, the first was a Florida publisher in 1886. See "The Non-Unionists—Individualist," *The Amalgamated Journal* 4 (19 March 1903), 8.
10. See Bruce E. Kaufman, *Managing the Human Factor: The Early Years of Human Resource Management in American Industry* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 93. Writers often used the phrase "labor question" interchangeably with the term "labor problem." See Rosanne Currarino, *The Labor Question in America: Economic Democracy in the Gilded Age* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011).
11. Quoted in "Industrial Congress," *Evening Star*, December 3, 1906, 14. For more on Post's antiunionism, see Peyton Paxson, "Charles William Post: The Mass Marketing of Health and Welfare" (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1993), 223–70. This was a powerful insult. In many circles in the late nineteenth century, the term "monopoly" took on an acutely objectionable meaning. Yet most ordinary people associated monopolies with industrial behemoths, dominant businesses that crowded out competitors, exploited workers, and took advantage of consumers. On antimonopoly sentiment, see Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 37; John P. Enyeart, *The Quest for 'Just and Pure Law': Rocky Mountain Workers and American Social Democracy, 1870–1924* (Sanford, CA: Sanford University Press, 2009), 5–7; Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 111, 329; and Richard R. John, "Robber Barons Redux: Antimonopoly Reconsidered," *Enterprise and Society* 13 (March 2012): 1–38.
12. For more on Citizens' Associations, see Louis G. Silverberg, "Citizens' Committees: Their Role in Industrial Conflict," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 5 (March 1941): 17–37; Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (New York: Quadrangle, 1969), 47–50; George G. Suggs Jr., *Colorado's War on Militant Unionism: James H. Peabody and the Western Federation of Miners* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991 [1972]), 68–72, 75, 77, 109, 146, 151–52, 184; Richard Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics: Class Conflict and the Origins of Modern Liberalism in Chicago, 1864–97* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 58–63, 87, 142, 163–67, 204, 334; Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 318; William Millikan, *A Union against Unions: The Minneapolis Citizens Alliance and Its Fight against Organized Labor, 1903–1947* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001); Theresa A. Case, "Blaming Martin Irons: Leadership and Popular Protest in the 1886 Southwest Strike," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 8 (January 2009): 51–82; Sam Mitrani, "Reforming Repression: Labor Anarchy, and Reform in the Shaping of the Chicago Police Department,

1879–1888,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 6 (Summer 2009): 73–96; and John B. Jentz and Richard Schneirov, *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 133, 179–86. Canadian employers also formed Citizens’ Committees. See Reinhold Kramer and Tom Mitchell, *When the State Trembled: How A. J. Andrews and the Citizens’ Committee Broke the Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

13. Ray Stannard Baker, “Organized Capital Challenges Organized Labor,” *McClure’s Magazine* 23 (July 1904): 279–92.

14. “The Strike at Dallas,” *Houston Daily Post*, 10 June 1897, 4. For another example of employer deceitfulness, see James Green, *The Devil Is Here in These Hills: West Virginia’s Coal Miners and Their Battle for Freedom* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2015), 127.

15. “The Strike at Dallas.”

16. “The Strike at Dallas.” For more on the Mosher Manufacturing Company, which began operations in 1894, see “New Incorporations,” *Electrical World* 23 (10 February 1894): 194.

17. In 1910, Mosher helped represent the organization’s fifth district, which covered the South. See “Miscellaneous Business,” *Iron Trade Review* 47 (24 November 1910): 960.

18. *Synopsis of Proceedings of the National Founders’ Association*, at Iroquois Hotel, Buffalo, New York (1 February 1899), 5.

19. “The National Foundrymen’s Association,” *Iron Age* 61 (27 January 1898), 27.

20. Antonio C. Pessano, “Organization of Manufacturers Necessary to Obtain the Best Results from Organized Labor: An Address Delivered before the Philadelphia Foundrymen’s Association” (n.p., 1902), 6, 11. This publication is housed at Yale University.

21. Quoted in “Correspondence,” *Iron Molders’ Journal* 36 (November 1900), 663. For more on the strike, see Margaret Loomis Stecker, “The National Founders’ Association,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 30 (February 1916), 359; and “Secretary’s Report,” *Iron Trade Review* 36 (12 November 1903): 42.

22. “A Card of the National Founders’ Association,” *Iron Molders’ Journal* 36 (September 1900): 527.

23. The seventeen Cleveland foundry owners held the line on wages. Many strikers, but not all of them, eventually returned to work and received the same wage, \$2.75 a day, which they had received prior to the strike. See “Molders Lose by Settlement,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (16 February 1901), 3.

24. “Help Wanted—Male,” *Minneapolis Journal*, 14 February 1902, 15.

25. Andrew W. Cohen, *The Racketeer’s Progress: Chicago and the Struggle for the Modern American Economy, 1900–1940* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

26. Howell John Harris, “Getting It Together: The Metal Manufacturers’ Association of Philadelphia, c. 1900–1930,” in *Masters to Managers: Historical and Comparative*

Perspectives on American Employers, ed. Sanford M. Jacoby (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 123.

27. Quoted in "Labor Man Is Wise," *Worcester Telegram*, 6 June 1902, 5.

28. Employers from as far away as Australia had inquired about the union-breaking activities of Worcester's employers. See "Metal Trades Association Notes," *Iron Trade Review* 38 (26 January 1905): 47.

29. "Attitude of Machinery Manufacturers," *Iron Trade Review* 31 (20 June 1901): 18. For an elaboration of this view, see William H. Pfahler, "Free Shops for Free Men," *Publications of the American Economic Association* 4 (February 1903): 183. On the emergence of the NMTA's antiunion position, see David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History, Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992 [1979]), 48–82.

30. *Bulletin of the National Metal Trades Association* 3 (December 1904): 562.

31. "Want Ads," *Paducah Evening Sun*, 16 July 1907, 5. IAM members were very active in 1907. See Montgomery, *Workers' Control*, 72.

32. "Splendid Showing," *Iron Trade Review* 42 (26 March 1908): 576.

33. Robert Wuest, "Acting Commissioner's Office," *Machinists' Monthly Journal* 19 (September 1907): 876.

34. William Collison, *The Apostle of Free Labour: The Life Story of William Collison, Founder and General Secretary of the National Free Labour Association, Told by Himself* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1913), 84.

35. *Ibid.*, 205.

36. *Ibid.*, 119.

37. *Ibid.*, 93.

38. *Ibid.*, 95. For the broader context, see Arthur J. McIvor, *Organised Capital: Employers' Associations and Industrial Relations in Northern England, 1880–1939* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Cathie Jo Martin and Duane Swank, *The Political Construction of Business Interests: Coordination, Growth, and Equality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 69–88.

39. For more on Fairchild, see Chad Pearson, *Reform or Repression: Organizing America's Anti-Union Movement* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). 75, 81.

40. Victor John Di Santo, "The Streetcar Workers of Albany, 1900–1921: The Union Era" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1994), 157–97. On employer-led incitement and sabotage, see Stephen Norwood, *Strikebreaking and Intimidation: Mercenaries and Masculinity in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

41. E. M. Fairchild, "Independent Labor League of America," *Corporations Auxiliary Bulletin* 2 (April 1903): 81.

42. Employers maintained open shops after the conclusion of both strikes. On the Hudson Valley strike, see "Hudson Valley Railway Strike," *New York Labor Bulletin* 14 (December 1902): 310.

43. E. M. Fairchild, "Independent Labor League of America," *Corporations Auxiliary Bulletin* 2 (April 1903): 81.

44. “For Independent Labor,” *New York Times*, 1 January 1903, 3.
45. On Payne’s NMTA involvement, see “Machinists’ Strike Bitter,” *New York Times*, 25 May 1901, 1; and “Personal,” *Age of Steel* 91 (26 April 1902): 26.
46. In addition, Elmira’s City Federation of Labor practiced a tradition of supporting labor struggles in the city by organizing boycotts of nonunion workplaces. See “Strike and Labor Troubles,” *Bulletin of the National Metal Trades Association* 1 (1 August 1902): 38.
47. “The Payne Strike,” *Machinists’ Monthly Journal* 15 (April 1903): 291.
48. “Addressed the Strikers,” *Elmira Daily Gazette and Free Press*, 16 October 1899, 5.
49. “Certain Injunction and Labor Cases,” *Congressional Edition* 5266 (1908), 18. This judge was consistent with others. According to legal historian Daniel Ernst, employers considered “the law a stalwart ally.” Daniel R. Ernst, “The Closed Shop, the Proprietary Capitalist, and the Law, 1897–1915” in *Masters to Managers: Historical and Comparative Perspectives on American Employers*, ed. Sanford Jacoby (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 132. For more on the state and labor, see Edwin E. Witte, *The Government in Labor Disputes* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1932); William E. Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); Gerald Friedman, *State-Making and Labor Movements: France and the United States, 1876–1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); and George I. Lovell, *Legislative Deferrals: Statutory Ambiguity, Judicial Power, and American Democracy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
50. E. M. Fairchild, “Independent Labor League of America,” *Corporations Auxiliary Bulletin* 2 (April 1903): 84.
51. E. M. Fairchild to Charles W. Eliot, 28 February 1903, UAI 5.150, Box 38, Harvard University Archives, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Courtesy of the Harvard University Archives.
52. *Ibid.*
53. The organization adopted a Ralph Waldo Emerson quotation as their motto: “Of what avail the plow or sail,/ Or land, or life, if freedom fail.” *Constitution and Bylaws of Grand Lodge of the Independent Labor League of America* (1903), 3–4. Also see “New Labor League Officers Elected,” *Elmira Daily Gazette and Free Press*, 28 March 1903.
54. E. M. Fairchild, “Independent Labor League of America,” *Corporations Auxiliary Bulletin* 2 (April 1903): 80–88.
55. “Refuses Machinists’ Demands,” *New York Times*, 9 June 1903, 3.
56. Quoted in Fairchild, “Independent Labor League,” 83.
57. Quoted in “To Protect the Right to Labor,” *Iron Trade Review* 36 (26 March 1903): 39.
58. “A Non-Union Union,” *Kansas City Independent*, 13 June 1903, 8. The number of antiunionists in the Workingmen’s Protective Association, which had branches in Indiana and Maryland, reached 8,000 workmen according to its spokespersons. See Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism, 1881–1917* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 205.

59. On the slogan “for the protection of the common people,” see Chad Pearson, *Reform or Repression: Organizing America’s Anti-Union Movement* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 56–87. For more on the Citizens’ Alliance and its populist language, see *The History of the Strike That Brought the Citizens’ Alliance of Denver, Colo., into Existence*, ed. J. C. Craig (n.p., 1903), Western History Collection, Denver Public Library; Rosemary Feurer, *Radical Unionism in the Midwest, 1900–1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 8.

60. “New Leaders,” *Kansas City Independent*, 15 August 1903, 1.

61. “Labor and Capital,” *Kansas City Independent*, 27 June 1903, 1.

62. Charles Stelzle, “Class Spirit in America,” *Open Shop* 4 (April 1905): 160. For more on Stelzle, see George H. Nash III, “Charles Stelzle: Apostle to Labor,” *Labor History* 11 (Spring 1970): 151–74. For an elaboration of this view, see Jean-Christian Venel, *The Employee: A Political History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 25–28.

63. *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of the Citizens’ Industrial Association of America, November 29 and 30, 1904* (Indianapolis: CIA Publication Department, 1904), 126.

64. “Shotguns Used to Break a Strike,” *Indianapolis Journal*, 23 February 1904, 10; and “Says a Report from Parry’s Indianapolis Convention,” *Weekly People*, 5 March 1904, 1. It is difficult to say whether or not elite vigilante actions like the one that Donzelmann helped organize were commonplace. According to historical sociologist Isaac William Martin, such actions were rare. See Isaac William Martin, *Rich People’s Movements: Grassroots Campaigns to Untax the One Percent* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 34. Other scholars disagree. In 1901, Tampa’s organized employers kidnapped and placed thirteen union activists on a boat bound for Honduras. Their example inspired others, including mine owners in Colorado. See Robert P. Ingalls, *Urban Vigilantes in the New South: Tampa, 1882–1936* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 55–86. In their study of the great Michigan copper strikes of 1913–14, historians Gary Kaunonen and Aaron Goings also disagree with Martin, noting that employers participated in “various forms of labor violence” in the early twentieth century. See Gary Kaunonen and Aaron Goings, *Community in Conflict: A Working-Class History of the 1913–14 Michigan Copper Strike and the Italian Hall Tragedy* (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 13, 40. Also see Christopher Capozzola, “The Only Badge Needed Is Your Patriotic Fervor: Vigilance, Coercion, and the Law in World War I America,” *Journal of American History* 88 (March 2002): 1354–82.

65. “Shotguns Used to Break a Strike,” *Indianapolis Journal*, 23 February 1904, 10.

66. National Association of Manufacturers, *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention*, New Orleans, LA, 14–16 April 1903, 124.

67. Collison, *Apostle of Free Labour*, 311.

68. *Ibid.*

69. David M. Parry, “President’s Address,” *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of the Citizens’ Industrial Association of America, November 29 and 30, 1904* (Indianapolis: CIA Publication Department, 1904), 12.

70. Scholars have long shown that employers relied on clergy in coal, steel, and textile company towns to preach a gospel of acquiescence. They enjoyed a degree of moral respectability, which helped legitimize the open-shop movement’s reformist characteristics. See David Alan Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880–1922* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 148–54; Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Leloudis, Robert Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Christopher B. Daly, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 177–78; and Green, *The Devil Is Here*, 21.

71. For a now-classic work on the limits of Protestant support for working-class struggles, see Ken Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel: Christianity and Labor in Industrial Philadelphia, 1865–1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

72. “The Open Shop: An Incentive to Dishonesty,” *Official Journal of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paperhangers of America* 19 (January 1905): 10.

73. “The World Hates a Strikebreaker or a Scab,” *American Photoengraver* 12 (March 1920): 172.